



April 13, 2005



## Maximum prison sentence for felon in possession of firearms

A federal judge today sentenced **Lenard Gibson**, of Providence, to ten years in federal prison – the maximum prison sentence – for being a felon in possession of firearms. In December, a jury found Gibson guilty of that charge after hearing evidence that he had illegally bought two guns at an East Providence shop.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente announced the sentence, which U.S. District Court Judge Mary M. Lisi imposed today in U.S. District Court, Providence.

During a two-day trial in December, Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard W. Rose presented evidence that, in early September 2004, Gibson went to E.P. Firearms in Riverside and placed a deposit on a pistol. He told the store owner that he couldn't legally buy the gun himself but would have someone else fill out the application for him. The store owner notified the **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives**.

The following day, with an ATF agent monitoring the transaction, Gibson had another individual fill out an application to buy two handguns – a .45-caliber and a .380-caliber pistol. However, when that individual wasn't available to pick up the guns after the waiting period was over, Gibson picked them up himself. ATF agents arrested him as he left the store.

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Since his arrest, Gibson, 29, of 301 Cranston Street, has been detained at the Wyatt Federal Detention Center, Central Falls.

ATF investigated the case, with assistance from **East Providence Police**. Assistant U.S. Attorney Rose prosecuted it as part of **Project Safe Neighborhoods**, a Department of Justice initiative against gun crimes. Under Project Safe Neighborhoods, the U.S. Attorney's Office, working with ATF, the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office, and other agencies, aggressively prosecutes federal firearms offenses in an effort to incarcerate those responsible for gun violence and deter others from committing gun crimes. Since 2001, federal firearms prosecutions in Rhode Island have more than doubled and gun offenders have been sentenced to a total of more than 600 years in federal prison.

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